

less and less until you did nothing at all for him and then still farther working now against, rather than for him.

O, that I could impress upon your minds your present miserable and deplorable condition compared to your former position. Then enjoying full union and communion with God, and fellowship with your brethren you were on the way to eternal life. Now you stand as the rejected, and the most miserable individual on the earth. This is exactly your state. And you are constantly and unceasingly beset by sin, and all the temptations of the hydra-headed demon and enemy of your soul.

Once upon a time Christ taught a parable like this: 'Behold a sower went forth to sow, and when he sowed some seed fell by the wayside and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places where they had not much earth and forthwith they sprang up because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was upon them they were scorched. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell into good ground and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold and some thirty fold. Who hath ears to hear let him hear. Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which was sown by the wayside. But he that received seed by the stony place the same is he that heareth the word and anon with joy he receiveth it, yet he hath not root in himself but denieth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word by and by he is offended. He also that received the seed among the thorn is he that heareth the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choked the word and he becometh unfruitful. Math. 13: 4-10, 18-24.

Who are you that will allow yourselves to become like those that received the seed by the wayside, or by stony places or by thorns? Beset by sin you fall. You become the dupe of some of your associates, who in your mouth are as sweet as honey, but after you have eaten them they are as bitter as wormwood. Beware of them. They are not what they seem. They are your enemies. I have known incidents in my short life where persons who received the preached word with joy soon were met by a stumbling block and they fell headlong. And I have known these busy bodies, these wolves in sheep's clothing fly to them and instead of lifting up the fallen and removing the stumbling blocks they poured wormwood and arsenic and hemlock into the wounded hearts, thus poisoning it more and more. This they did by saying 'yes, yes,' such and such a brother or sister did very wrong, or the church is very much out of place, then going direct to the ones who may have been the apparent cause of the trouble tells him a great story of what the fallen brother should have said.

Shame on the busy-body, and double shame upon him who cannot see to stand, but allows every weight and the sins which doth so easily beset us, to cause him to fall. I ask you are you happy? No you cannot be. Like the prodigal you are far from home. Starving, poor, wretched and disgraced being that you are. Oh, say with the prodigal, 'I will arise and go to my Father, and I will say to Father, I have sinned against thee in thy sight.' And before I leave this part let me say this in conclusion to you who may be weak, remember my text, 'No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.'

Oh, take warning! Looking back and not fit for the Kingdom of God! Oh, I warn you to not pass the fatal point. Paul says: 'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God and the power of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame.

I will now briefly notice the third and last class. This is the class who when once they have taken hold of the handles of the plow never look back, but like Paul they forget the things that are behind them and ever press on toward the mark of the prize. There is not a good work that every good Christian does not engage in. There is not a Christian who is not engaged in every good work.

That man or woman who works unfalteringly will be thoroughly qualified for the Kingdom of God. Success will crown every effort. Every individual who has counted the cost will, if he determines to build, will become a wise master builder. 'For what man among you is he who wishing to build a tower does not first set down and count the cost, to see if he have enough to finish, lest when he has laid the foundation he has not wherewithal to finish the building and his neighbors passing by mock him.'

Every true child of God is a builder. Behold the majestic splendor of the Christian's tower! foundation is the eternal 'Rock of Ages.' Its stones in the walls are the adamant Truths of our omnipotent God cemented together by the precious blood of Christ.

It is built so strongly, and so securely, and so to be perpetual and eternal, that all the powers of Hades cannot overthrow it. When the great mountains of the earth heave to and fro, when wild and angry waves of sin dash fifteen cubits high, when the great sun is darkened, and the moon does not give her light, and the stars fall from heaven, when the powers of the heavens are shaken and the elements melt with a fervent heat and when hell bursts forth with heavings and surgings and lightnings and thunderings in Vesuvian volcanos, then the Christian's mighty tower shall stand. For the very gates of hell can not prevail against it.

Onward, forward, upward until the very throne of God is reached, 'For no man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.'

The Sacred Scripture.

God has uniformly sent forth warnings sufficient to enable the believing to escape his wrath and to condemn those who have not heeded the warning. This was the case before the flood. By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen, as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house by which he condemned the world. Heb. 11: 7. Let us search the Scriptures. It has a reward in itself. It makes the boy or girl who does, more noble, more like the 'Blessed One' who taught us to love others as we love ourselves.

It is not something to be read and then forgot, but take warning, for hath not the Scripture said, 'He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still; for behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be.' Let us have a right to that 'Tree of Life' and enter in through the gate to that beautiful city prepared for us. Michael Angelo said: 'Genius is an eternal patience,' and Carlyle defined it as the infinite capability of work. Endurance and patience are virtues that are cultivated and are the distinctive badges of manhood. If the sacred Scriptures do not designate any period, in particular for the second appearing of Christ, then men should at once abandon the vain search for proofs of his coming. But if prophecy in a most clear and harmonious manner, does point to the period of that great event, and if there is evidence 'it is near even at the doors.' The subject at once assumes vast importance. Before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus a forerunner was sent to propose the way before the Lord. Those who did not receive Christ were rejected, because as he said of Jerusalem when warning the people of the destruction of their city and temple thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Read the doom of the false shepherds who came up to the day of the Lord with their garments all stained over with the blood of souls. Unaccountable this,

they now cry peace and safety. They stand between us and the people and turn away the arrow of truth. But their day is coming, dreadful, beyond description.

How, ye shepherds and cry. A something strikingly awful shall forewarn that the world will come to an end, and that the last day is even at the door. 'Behold I stand at the door and knock.' The Lord is good, let us imitate him, for he is kind in all his ways. 'Shout hallelujah give honor and fame, praise everlasting unto his great name.' I wonder how many today are praising the Lord for his great and loving kindness. Heaven and earth and all creation magnify his name. As the mountains are round and about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round and about. Of all beautiful hymns there is none so effective to me as the one entitled 'The Golden Gate.' That beautiful golden gate. Be ready for soon the time will come to enter that 'Golden Gate.' Let it not be asked, 'Is there any one here who is not prepared?' but let us all be prepared. After that loved one has died for our sins, been crucified, nailed to the cross, should we not strive all of us for that better kingdom, Zion, city of our God? After Christ rose from the dead see how tenderly he dealt with the erring disciple. Peter was familiar and friendly with the enemies of Christ. A damsel says to this bold Peter, 'Thou also was with this Jesus of Gallilee.' But he denied before them all saying, 'I knowest not what thou sayest.' And again he denied him with an oath, 'I do not know the man.' Another passed and yet he did not realize his position. His speech betrayed him and he again denied his Master. The master might have turned and said to him, 'Is it true Peter that thou hast forgotten me so soon? Do you not remember when your wife's mother lay sick of a fever that I rebuked the disease and it left her? Do you remember when in answer to your cry "Lord save me or I perish" I stretched out my hand and kept you from drowning in the water? Have you forgotten being with me at the supper table and in Gethsemane? Is it true?' The lord might have upbraided him with questions such as these, but he did nothing of the kind. He cast one look on Peter and there was so much love in it that it broke that bold disciple's heart and he went out and wept bitterly. What a tender and loving Saviour we have.

Friend if you are one of the wanderers, let the loving look of the Master win you back and let him restore you to the joy of his salvation. May God restore other backsliders and make them a thousand times more fit for his glory than they ever were before. I hope to meet you all in heaven.

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Many intelligent people thoughtlessly decide that it is impossible to maintain an organization without a creed, discipline or constitution reduced to writing. This conclusion is forced upon them by the fact that nearly all the religious bodies have a confession of faith in writing, by which they are guided. A survey of the historical church and the history of governments, prove that the element of strength exists in the virtue, honor, conscience, and morality of the people, and not in the language of constitutions or laws. The poorest constitution is adequate for the government of an honest and righteous people, while the best ever produced by the wisdom of men has no control over a nation thieves and robbers. Confessions of Faith have no influence in unifying the religious world, but serve only to classify men into sects and narrow their conception of the universal salvation promulgated by Jesus Christ.

Under the system of man-made creeds, society government, and the government of the thought and reflection of men's minds are aimed at in one system, which is at variance with all nature, scripture and good sense. The thoughts of men's minds cannot be governed by a creed or discipline. They may be chained in ignorance and shackled with bigotry and superstition until their influence upon the lives of men are completely destroyed, but this sort of government is more ungodly than the common sins of humanity. The practice of dressing the mind and thoughts of men with a man-made creed like a child dresses its 'dolly,' is sin of the most malignant type.